

Miami-Dade County
Employee Suggestion Program
Department
Coordinator and Evaluator
Reference and Training Manual

Released Summer 2004

Employee Relations Department
Career Development Division

Miami-Dade County's Employee Suggestion Program

Established 1962

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Introduction

“If there is a better solution ...find it!”

Thomas Edison

Introduction

The Employee Suggestion Program (ESP) has existed in Miami-Dade County since September 4, 1962. Bill Hampton, as an Administrative Assistant to the County Manager, chaired the first Suggestion Award Committee in Dade County. The Program was originally developed by the Personnel Department.

In 1983, the Program was transferred to the Office of Productivity Management. A new Administrative Order was drafted in 1984 and the Program was completely revamped into the Program we know now. In 1988, ESP was returned to the Personnel Department renamed the Employee Relations Department. Additional modifications to the A.O. were made in 1989.

In 2002, ESP was again transferred to the newly created Office of Employee Recognition (OER) that was a part of the County Managers Office. A.O. 7-8 was updated at that time to increase the award amounts and others changes were made as well. As a result of budget constraints, OER was disbanded at the conclusion of fiscal year 2003. ESP returned to the Employee Relations Department.

The purpose of the ESP is to motivate employees to share ideas in order to:

- Improve productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, safety and quality of government services
- Provide a channel of communication between management and employees
- Stimulate morale
- Recognize employees who foster an atmosphere of creativity, imagination, and innovation

When an employee has an idea, they submit it in writing directly to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager. The idea becomes a suggestion when it is assigned a number and date stamped. The Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager reviews every idea for eligibility and channels it to the appropriate County department for evaluation. The ESP Departmental Coordinator, or point of contact, processes the suggestion through the Departmental Suggestion Review Committee (DSRC) to the most knowledgeable management personnel for evaluation. This evaluator reviews the idea and prepares a report based on the following criteria:

- Practicality
- Efficiency
- Conservation of property and/ or materials
- Physical Working Conditions: safety
- Public Image
- Trial Implementation: will it be tested and considered further?
- Length of Trial Implementation: recommend test period
- Overall Evaluation: recommend action

Employee suggestions can be awarded as much as \$5,000 cash when successfully implemented. Some other special and recognition awards consist of:

- administrative leave
- promotional gift items
- certificates
- written acknowledgment in personnel file

Every employee who receives a cash award is recognized at a ceremony by the County Manager's Office. Department Directors, supervisors, and other suggesters all participate.

At the close of the year, all the suggestions that receive cash are screened for the ESP Manager's Grand Award. This Award recognizes the best suggestion of the year. The winner is announced at an annual event that brings all the participating departments together to acknowledge their achievements.

Since 1984, more almost 8,000 different suggestions have been processed through the Employee Suggestions Program. The 1,408 suggestions successfully implemented by September 30, 2003 have resulted in first year costs savings in excess of \$19 million.

Administrative Order 7-8

"An organization that is committed to creative collaboration will ride the wave of the future. They will go beyond the realm of assumptive thinking and welcome the dawn of innovation... because there is nothing more empowering than an idea whose time has come."

Administrative Order

MIAMI-DADE

Administrative Order No.: 7-8

Title: Employee Suggestion Program

Ordered: 10/22/2002

Effective: 11/1/2002

AUTHORITY:

Section 4.02 of the Miami Dade County Charter and Section 2-28 of the Miami Dade County Code.

SUPERSEDES:

This Administrative Order supersedes Administrative Order 7-8, dated March 21, 1989.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Employee Suggestion Program (ESP) is to motivate Miami-Dade County employees and departments to share ideas to: improve the productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, safety, and quality of government services; stimulate morale; and recognize employees whose suggestions and innovations result in either monetary savings, increased revenues to the County, improved quality of services, or otherwise benefit Miami-Dade County and its residents.

DEFINITIONS:

Suggestion -- a voluntary, written, original idea or innovative application proposed by an individual employee, a group of employees, or a team of Miami-Dade County employees that clearly identifies a specific problem and suggests a specific method or improvement: to do any job or procedure better, quicker, easier, safer, or at less cost; to increase productivity; to improve the quality of work life; to enhance the County's public image; or to otherwise benefit Miami-Dade County in the judgment of the Employee Suggestion Committee. Suggestions submitted to an Employee Participation Program (EPP) by employees may also be submitted to ESP.

If an individual employee or a group or team of employees submits a suggestion to ESP and the suggestion is eligible for award through a gain sharing initiative in a departmental Employee Participation Program, the employee can only receive one of the two cash awards. The award can be the higher of the two options. Only those suggestions that receive the ESP Special Award can be considered for the ESP Manager's Grand Award.

Employee Participation Program (EPP) – The EPP is a formal business improvement process fostering a mutually supportive management, union and employee working relationship to improve operations through effective employee

participation. Employees submit voluntary suggestions for improvement to their department EPP program individually and in teams or groups. These suggestions are recorded in a department database and then reviewed. As appropriate, suggestions are implemented.

ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS:

A Miami-Dade County employee, a group of employees, or a team of County employees may receive an award for specific suggestions that are exemplary and produce positive results for the County.

Employees below the level of division director, or equivalent rank/position as determined by the Employee Suggestion Committee, shall be eligible for Recognition and Special Awards. Those not eligible for Recognition and Special Awards shall be eligible for Innovator Awards.

Members of the Employee Suggestion Committee, ESP staff, and the County Manager's staff, including the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Audit and Management Services (AMS), and the Office of Performance Improvement (OPI) are not eligible for Recognition and Special Awards.

Employees appointed as ESP Departmental Coordinators or EPP Coordinators are not eligible to submit suggestions to ESP while they are serving in that capacity.

To be eligible for a Recognition or Special Award the recognized employee's, group's, or team's efforts must be above and beyond the recognized employee(s)' responsibilities as defined in the employee(s)' job description, or by typically assigned / performed duties. If an employee has authority to implement the suggestion without consulting a higher authority it is within their normal duties.

AWARD CATAGORIES:

1. **Recognition Award** - The Recognition Award is given to individuals, groups, or teams for those suggestions selected for a trial implementation. The suggester(s) receive eight (8) hours of administrative leave and a Recognition Award Certificate.

2. **Special Award** - The Special Award is presented for those suggestions successfully implemented and approved by Department Directors. There are two types of Special Awards:

a. **Intangible** - a suggestion for which a precise monetary value cannot be determined, including: more efficient and/or effective management of operations, improvements in employee morale, health, safety, and quality of work life; and improved quality of service to Miami-Dade County residents. The Intangible net awards shall range from \$50 to a maximum of \$1,000. The amount of cash awarded for Intangible Suggestions is determined by factors such as the seriousness, frequency, and extent of the problem, and the creativity and effectiveness of the solution.

b. **Tangible** - a suggestion whose value can be precisely determined and

demonstrates monetary savings or increases in revenue. Tangible net awards shall range from \$50 to a maximum of \$5,000, up to 10% of the estimated net monetary savings or increase in revenue of the first full year of implementation and approved by the Department Director. The cost of capital expenditures shall be amortized over the useful life of the equipment or facility. Direct labor costs and indirect or administrative costs of implementation shall be considered first year costs.

All net savings or revenue increases that result from an implemented suggestion should be accurately recorded and appropriately documented. Each department will be required to present the documentation at their annual budget hearing with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

The costs of Special Awards shall be funded from the budget(s) of the department(s) that benefit from the suggestion. All Special Awards shall be issued to the suggester in the form of a County check in the net amount awarded.

When a suggestion receives a Special Award, any savings from the suggestion cannot be counted as savings for gain-sharing purposes by a Departmental EPP. Employees cannot be compensated twice for the same suggestion through the two different initiatives. The suggester must select whether to receive a gain-sharing award or a Special Award.

3. Manager's Grand Award – The Manager's Grand Award is given at the end of the fiscal year for the most outstanding Special Award suggestion. The County Manager shall select the winner from the Employee Suggestion Committee's recommendations. The County Manager will determine the amount of the Grand Award and will determine the runner up and other awards presented.

4. Innovator Award – The Innovator Award is a special recognition award given for exceptional solutions to problems that may fall within the individual's job assignment. Management staff and personnel ineligible for a Recognition or Special Award are eligible for the Innovator Award. Nominations are submitted by Department Directors or the management staff of the County Manager's Office to the Employee Suggestion Committee for review at any time. The County Manager shall make the final decision and determine the type of recognition award based upon the Employee Suggestion Committee's recommendation, which may include cash, administrative leave, and/ or non-monetary recognition.

5. Bravo Award – This award recognizes a group assigned to develop or implement a suggestion, solve a problem, or create a process. Department Directors can nominate the group for this award to the Director of the Office of Employee Recognition after they have successfully completed their assignment in an exemplary manner. A Bravo Award consists of \$500. The award amount is equally divided among the group members. The County Manager can deny a Bravo Award recommendation.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Department Directors

Department Directors will develop a process within their department to accept, review, and potentially implement ESP suggestions as follows:

- a. Create a Department Suggestion Review Committee (DSRC), or a series of review groups, if department size warrants, to evaluate suggestions. The DSRC or panel may be comprised of representation from the department divisions, within a division, or whatever composition the Department Director decides will assure a fair review and an environment conducive to employee participation and support of business improvement practices.
- b. Appoint a Departmental Coordinator to guide the work of the DSRC
- c. Resolve conflicts regarding the submission of suggestions.
- d. Review and approve Recognition Awards and Special Awards for suggestions implemented in their department.
- e. Ensure assignment of implementation responsibilities.
- f. Determine if award recommendations and evaluations are adequate (clear, accurate, objective, and complete).
- g. Recommend award amounts for implemented suggestions in accordance with ESP Guidelines.
- h. Forward recommendations to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager in the Office of Employee Recognition (OER) for processing, award payment, and award presentation.
- i. Review requests for reconsideration of award decisions and notify the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager of their decision within sixty (60) days.
- j. Participate in Special Award, Manager's Grand Award, and other ESP award ceremonies as needed.

2. Departmental Coordinator

Each Department Director shall appoint a senior staff representative to serve as the ESP Departmental Coordinator. The major responsibilities of the Coordinator include:

- a. Receive ESP suggestions from the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager.
- b. Assign suggestions to the DSRC for review and evaluation.
- c. Monitor the suggestion review and evaluation process.
- d. Provide feedback to contributors and to ESP.
- e. Log suggestions into departmental database.
- f. Coordinate and track the in-house evaluation process for their department.
- g. Review and submit departmental evaluations to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager after obtaining Department Director's sign-off.
- h. Promote and market ESP within respective department.
- i. Designate staff as may be required to support and facilitate ESP activities.
- j. Work closely with DSRC to assure timely evaluation, implementation, and measurement of suggestion results.
- k. Serve on the Manager's Grand Award Screening Panel, on a rotating basis, as determined by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager.

3. Department Suggestion Review Committee (DSRC)

Department Directors will assign a group or a series of groups, if department size warrants it, within their department to evaluate ESP suggestions. The DSRC or panel shall be comprised of representatives the Department Director determines will assure a fair review and an environment conducive to employee participation. The DSRC will work closely with the finance officer, the budget department liaison, and the departmental personnel officer for accurate evaluation and tracking of cost savings and revenue. The DSRC shall:

- a. Evaluate suggestions for efficiency, cost savings, quality of life, or service improvements.
- b. Track all suggestions submitted to the department through ESP.
- c. Establish or review performance measures by which efficiencies or cost savings will be assessed.
- d. Propose or approve a timetable or tentative schedule for implementation and assessment of promising suggestions.
- e. Establish a schedule for monitoring and measuring suggestion implementation.
- f. Assure timely evaluation, implementation, and measurement of suggestion results.

4. Employee Suggestion Committee

The County Manager shall appoint a Committee to: set program policy; define and clarify ESP rules and procedures; recommend nominees for the Manager's Grand Award and Innovator Award; and make final recommendations regarding special circumstances of eligibility, evaluation, or award calculation.

The Committee shall meet at least once quarterly. The Committee shall have nine (9) voting members appointed by the County Manager, including:

- Five directors of operating departments or designees (appointments rotated each fiscal year)
- Director of the Office of Employee Recognition or designee
- Director of Audit and Management Services or designee
- Director of the Office of Management and Budget or designee
- County Manager or designee

5. Manager's Grand Award Screening Panel

Each year, a group comprised of Department Coordinators is assembled by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager on a rotating basis to review all Special Awards and to rank them for the Employee Suggestion Committee's review and selection of the Manager's Grand Award winner.

6. Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager

The Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager is a representative of the Office of Employee Recognition whose primary responsibilities are to:

- a. Develop and maintain overall program operations.

- b. Design program operating procedures and recommend policy changes.
- c. Develop a marketing plan and conduct an employee outreach program
- d. Train ESP Departmental Coordinators and DSRCs.
- e. Provide staff assistance to the Employee Suggestion Committee.
- f. Provide technical assistance to departments upon request.
- g. Receive employee suggestions, review them for completeness and compliance with ESP guidelines, and assign them to County departments for evaluation.
- h. Track all suggestions and coordinate processing with Departmental Coordinators.
- i. Process suggestions approved by Department Directors for payment and presentations.
- j. Encourage the application of successfully implemented suggestions to other relevant departments.
- k. Conduct follow-up monitoring of implemented suggestions as needed.
- l. Plan and prepare all facets of Special Award, Manager's Grand Award, and other employee award ceremonies as required.
- m. Prepare annual report to the County Manager, periodic reports to the Efficiency and Competition Commission, and other ESP departmental status reports as needed.
- n. Design and implement additional employee recognition opportunities as needed to improve morale and increase department participation.

7. Office of Employee Recognition Director

The Office of Employee Recognition will administer the Employee Suggestion Program. The Director of the Office of Employee Recognition shall be responsible for ensuring department compliance with the ESP guidelines. Utilizing reports and other monitoring mechanisms the Director will also periodically communicate the status of departmental performance to the Employee Suggestion Committee, the Efficiency and Competition Commission, and the County Manager.

PROGRAM RULES:

- 1. All written suggestions shall be accepted for review. Oral suggestions shall not be accepted, but requests from the suggester(s) for technical assistance to complete the suggestion form shall be honored.
- 2. A suggestion that does not offer a specific solution may not be accepted for evaluation. The suggestion may be returned to the submitter for a complete solution.
- 3. If the suggestion is not accepted for either a trial or final implementation, it is not eligible for an award.
- 4. The following suggestion subjects shall not be eligible for award consideration:
 - a. Personal and personnel grievances
 - b. Adjustments in job classifications, benefits, or salaries
 - c. Matters within the scope of collective bargaining
 - d. Matters requiring legislative or court action other than by County ordinance
 - e. Stricter enforcement of already existing rules, regulations, or Ordinances within

the County Code

f. Routine corrections or updates to printed material and hard copy or other form

g. Periodic or routine matters for which established procedures are provided such as:

- Housekeeping (loose or frayed carpeting).
- Normal maintenance and repairs (a missing or damaged "stop" sign or malfunctioning traffic Signal) unless an improved method is proposed.
- Adherence to prescribed safety practices.
- Requisition or purchase of commonly used items (obtained from local stock, purchased locally or available through General Services Administration).
- Ideas on subjects periodically re-examined by management

h. Increases in existing fees or charges

i. An idea awarded cash under a previous suggestion, is not eligible for another cash award for a similar application of the idea.

5. Any eligible employee whose suggestion is implemented shall not lose their eligibility for any monetary award by reason of termination, resignation, retirement, promotion, or transfer. In the event of the suggester's death, the award shall be paid to the employee's estate or beneficiary. In the case of a terminated employee, the County Manager will review the circumstances and determine if the award can be presented.

6. Special Awards and Bravo Awards shall be split equally among eligible co-signees of a suggestion if more than one individual submits the suggestion. In no event will the net award per co-signees be less than \$25. The limit on the number of co-signees is eight (8).

7. Suggestions relating to the content of a County Memorandum of Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, Board of County Commissioners Resolution, Department Performance Agreement, contract, current process, problem solving process or the work of a group created under the Employee Participation Program guidelines may be delayed for consideration until the agreement, contract, or study is completed.

8. If a department modifies an employee's suggestion so that the specific solution adopted is in a different form, the employee may be eligible for an award if the employee's suggestion is considered to be of substantial assistance and was directly responsible for management taking action. If the final adopted suggestion does not allow for the quantifiable identification of the employee's contribution, then the suggestion may be judged as an Intangible Special Award.

9. Suggestions which involve patentable inventions shall be eligible for awards. If a suggestion involves patent rights, the County's Administrative Order 7-12 on the County Policy Regarding Employee Patent Rights shall determine the employee's and County's position.

10. New or newly-modified or designed equipment (that part that is exclusively new), systems, procedures or forms shall not be open to suggestions for the first ninety (90) days of actual use, or the warranty period, if applicable, of the equipment or system. Consideration of the suggestion shall be delayed until the 90-day use period

or warranty period expires, whichever is longer.

11. The Employee Suggestion Committee shall determine the eligibility of employees and suggestions. Their decision shall be final and binding and not subject to review by any other official or tribunal.

12. If a suggestion is not awarded, the same or similar suggestion is not eligible to be resubmitted by any suggester for a two (2) year period after the suggestion is closed. After two (2) years the suggestion is again eligible for submission by any suggester.

AWARD PROCESS:

1. Suggestion Submittal Form:

Suggestions must be submitted on the Employee Suggestion Form or using MetroNet or the Internet. The suggestion form should be forwarded directly by the employee to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager at the Office of Employee Recognition. All suggestions shall be acknowledged. Participants in department EPPs may submit their suggestions to both their department EPP Program and to the Employee Suggestion Program.

Upon request, the identity of a suggester shall not be revealed by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager except for award purposes and, in special cases, for the sake of clarifying eligibility.

2. Departmental Evaluation:

The Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager shall forward eligible suggestions to the ESP Departmental Coordinator in the appropriate department(s) for evaluation. The Coordinator will assign suggestions to the DSRC for evaluation and ensure that all suggestions are logged into the database.

The DSRC will review the suggestions, evaluate their potential effectiveness, and track cost savings and revenue. The DSRC will send its recommendations for implementation and its evaluation of any subsequent savings to the Department Director through the ESP Department Coordinator. The Department Director will make award decisions and sign-off on actual savings.

The ESP Departmental Coordinator will monitor the departmental review process to assure timely evaluation, implementation, and measurement of suggestions. The ESP Departmental Coordinator will make certain that suggesters and the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager receive appropriate feedback regarding suggestions.

Initial department evaluations shall be completed within 60 sixty calendar days after receipt, using the Evaluation Form provided by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager. The departmental evaluation shall be signed by the Departmental Director or Deputy Department Director before it is returned to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager for processing. The Department

Director's recommendation shall be used as a basis to authorize awards.

3. Department Implementation:

Suggestions approved for implementation will be monitored and the results will be measured. The department director will recommend Special Award amounts for implemented suggestions and will forward recommendations to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager for review and processing.

4. Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager Review:

Upon receipt of the departmental evaluation, the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager shall review the evaluation for completeness and accuracy. The Manager may request additional information from the evaluating Department as needed.

A Recognition Award shall be given to the suggester if both the departmental evaluation and the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager's recommendation support a trial implementation. If neither recommendation supports a trial implementation, the Recognition Award shall be denied. If the recommendations differ, the matter shall be submitted to the Employee Suggestion Committee for award determination.

5. Special Award Approval Process:

Special Awards will be approved by Department Directors based on ESP guidelines. The Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager will process approved awards for payment and submit quarterly reports to the Employee Suggestion Committee detailing suggestions received, approved, and pending.

6. Re-evaluations:

If a suggestion is rejected, an employee may request that the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager reconsider the decision by submitting additional information to support the request within two (2) years of the notification date. The Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager will review the new information and submit it for re-evaluation, if appropriate, to the department director and the DSRC. An employee has the right to request a final review by the Employee Suggestion Committee. The Employee Suggestion Committee will render a decision concerning the suggestion as necessary. The Employee Suggestion Committee's decision on reconsiderations shall be final and binding and not subject to review by any other official or tribunal.

An employee may also request, in writing, that their suggestion be reconsidered for award purposes if the suggestion is put into effect within two (2) years of the date the idea was rejected and closed by a department.

7. Manager's Grand Award Selection Process:

The Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager shall convene the ESP

Manager's Grand Award Screening Panel annually. Comprised of Department Coordinators that rotate annually, the Panel will review all the Special Awards made during the year and rate their impact on Miami-Dade County. After interviewing at least the top ten suggestions in both the tangible and intangible categories, the Panel will complete a second rating process. The top rated suggestions in each category are then referred to the ESP Committee for consideration of the ESP Manager's Grand Award.

The ESP Committee shall review the finalist tangible and intangible suggestions and recommend the winner and runner-ups to the County Manager. The County Manager will select the Grand Award winner(s) and will determine the amount of the award each year.

8. Award Acknowledgment

A Certificate of Award shall be issued to the suggester acknowledging the award category, the award, and the suggestion. The department shall record a recognition statement in the suggester's next employee performance evaluation acknowledging the receipt of the award and describing the suggestion.

REVIEW:

Every year the Director of the Office of Employee Recognition shall review the Employee Suggestion Program operation and issue a report to the County Manager. The report shall include the number, types and sources of suggestions received, efficiency of the review and implementation process, savings and intangible benefits realized, and may include recommendations for adjustments or revisions to the Program.

ESP Suggestion Form

It takes only a single idea, a single action to move the world.

Miami-Dade County Employee Suggestion Form

Employee Suggestion Program

IDEAS PAY OFF! THINK OF WAYS TO IMPROVE		DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
NAME: (Please Print)	Work Phone	Home Phone
		Suggestion Number:
HOME ADDRESS: (Give House or Apartment No. City and Zip Code)		Date Received:
JOB TITLE:	Social Security Number:	
		Evaluating Dept(s):
Department:	Work Address:	
		Anonymous:
Supervisor's Name:	Work Phone:	

SUGGESTION TITLE:

PRESENT CONDITION

Describe the present condition you would like to improve.

CONSIDER

Current Process:

MY SUGGESTION

Explain your suggestion in detail. Be specific. Attach additional sheets if necessary. (See examples and procedures.)

CONSIDER

Improved Process:

SAVINGS OR BENEFITS

Give your best estimate of the dollar savings or other benefits that will result from your suggestion.

CONSIDER

Manpower & Savings:

☐ Check this box if you attach additional sheets, Drawings, Samples, etc.

If this is a joint suggestion, it must be signed by both or all suggesters. Please provide co-suggester information on additional ESP Form or sheet.

Signature _____

☐ Check this box if you do not want your name to appear on ESP Evaluation sheets seen by your Supervisor.

Date _____
 MAIL THIS FORM VIA, INTEROFFICE TO
 Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager
 Employee Relations Department
 111 NW 1 St, Suite #2110
 or Email flogom@co.miami-dade.fl.us
 (Make a copy of this form for your records)

I hereby understand and agree that the acceptance by me of any monetary award from Miami-Dade County for this suggestion shall be deemed payment in full, and for myself, my heirs, or my assignees, I hereby waive any claim or claims against the County which may arise as consequence of the County's approval of this suggestion.

WHAT IS ESP? The Miami –Dade Employee Suggestion Program (ESP), first started in 1962 is designed to improve the quality of government services. Its purpose is to share ideas, recognize employees, stimulate morale, and increase productivity, ESP is **your** program!

WHAT IS A SUGGESTION? A suggestion is a written, original idea that identifies a specific problem and suggests a specific method or improvement to do any job or procedure better, quicker, easier, safer, or cheaper; or to improve the quality of government services and facilities, the quality of work life, or the County's public image. **You might want to consider the following examples:**

Methods: Simplify; Eliminate Bottlenecks; Devise New Methods; Streamline

Working: Smarter Not Harder; Conditions; Eliminate Hazards; Improve Health Conditions

Equipment/Materials New tool design; Improve equipment; Reduce Maintenance Cost; Use Scrap Metal, Eliminate Rehandling, Reduce Spoilage

Office: Simplify Procedures; Simplify Filing; Eliminate Duplication

WHY SHOULD YOU PARTICIPATE? Dade County wants your ideas on how to improve its productivity and Services and will pay you up to \$5,000 in cash for suggestions that County departments are able to use.

HOW DO YOU GET INVOLVED?

First. Fill out the Suggestion Form! The Form also has instructions for suggesters. If you need more Forms contact your ESP Departmental Coordinator. If you don't know who your ESP Departmental Coordinator is, contact the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager at 375-1364.

Second. Start Creating IDEAS! There are no rules and regulations for creating good ideas. But successful suggesters find these Principles helpful:

- 1) Narrow down the problem. Try to pinpoint it. Be specific.
- 2) Try to concentrate. Think of only one problem at a time.
- 3) Be persistent. Good ideas rarely come on the first try.
- 4) Be confident in your search for ideas.
- 5) Let your creativity take over. When your mind gets tired, rest for awhile. Your mind will keep on working unconsciously and come up with new ideas when you are thinking about something else. Keep ideas flowing.
- 6) Anticipate questions. Be prepared to have someone say that your idea is impractical; it's been tried before; or it won't work. Figure out counter arguments in advance. Be ready to sell your idea. Anticipate obstacles likely to arise in implementing your idea.
- 7) Develop as many methods as you can to present your idea effectively.
- 8) Determine the benefits to the County, your job and other employees.

THIRD. Ask for help! If you need technical assistance, don't be afraid to ask your supervisor, your ESP Departmental Coordinator or the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager for help.

FOURTH. Send your Suggestion Form by interoffice mail directly to: Stephen P. Clark Center, Employee Relations Department, 111 NW 1 St, Suite #2110 or Email: flogom@co.miami-dade.fl.us

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR SUGGESTION? Your suggestion will be reviewed by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager for eligibility. Eligible suggestions will then be forwarded to the appropriate County department(s) for evaluation. If there is agreement that your idea should receive a trial test, you will receive a Recognition Award and (8) hours administrative leave. Once your suggestion has been trial tested, the department will evaluate the success of the trial run and recommend whether or not it should be adopted permanently. Each Special Award is judged on individual merit.

WHICH SUGGESTIONS ARE INELIGIBLE? The following suggestion subjects are not eligible for award consideration:

- ❖ Personal and personnel grievances
- ❖ Adjustments in benefits, salaries, or job classifications.
- ❖ Matters that are within the scope of collective bargaining.
- ❖ Matters requiring legislative or court action other than by County ordinance.
- ❖ Stricter enforcement of already existing rules, regulations, or ordinances.
- ❖ Matters involving routine corrections, maintenance, housekeeping activities, or adherence to prescribed safety practices.
- ❖ Increases in existing fees or charges.
- ❖ An area awarded cash under a previous suggestion.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE AND FOR WHICH AWARDS? All County employees are eligible to participate in ESP in different Categories:

RECOGNITION AWARD: A Recognition Award (8) hours administrative leave and a Recognition Award Certificate is given to a suggester whose idea has been accepted by a department for a trial run. Employees below the level of Division Head are eligible.

SPECIAL AWARD: This is a cash award given to a Recognition Award recipient whose idea is successfully implemented by a department after its trial run. The Special Award can be given for either tangible or intangible suggestions. An intangible suggestion is one for which a cash value cannot be determined and is eligible for an award of \$50 to \$1,000. A tangible suggestion is one for which a cash value can be measured and is eligible for an award of \$50 to \$5,000. Tangible awards are based upon a percentage factor up to 10% of the net savings during the first year of implementation.

MANAGER'S GRAND AWARD: This award singles out the most outstanding Special Award winner at the end of each fiscal Year.

INNOVATOR AWARD: This is given to senior management staff and employees otherwise ineligible for Recognition or Special Awards. Nominations are made by Department Directors or staff of the County Manager's Office.

BRAVO AWARD: A cash award of \$500 is given to groups or teams when their solution to a problem assigned to them is successfully implemented by their department.

Standard Operating Procedures

A mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions

Standard Operating Procedures

Every suggestion is numbered, date-stamped, and reviewed for eligibility by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager.

Ineligible suggestions are not accepted for evaluation. The Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager notifies employees directly when their submittal does not qualify in accordance with the guidelines in A.O. 7-8. A participation gift is forwarded to the employee and a copy of the notice is forwarded to the employee's ESP Departmental Coordinator, as information only.

ANONYMOUS SUGGESTIONS: Employees can elect to have their suggestions reviewed anonymously. The Central ESP Office preserves the identity of the suggester until the suggestion is evaluated. At that time the identity of the employee is made known to ensure that the employee is eligible before an award is processed.

Eligible suggestions are sent to ESP Departmental Coordinators for evaluation processing.

1. The ESP Departmental Coordinator reviews the suggestion and follows the internal procedure they have set up in their department to include the Departmental Suggestion Review Committee (DSRC) and assigns it to the proper evaluator for a recommendation.
2. The evaluator decides whether or not a suggestion will be implemented and/ or warrants a trial test. The DSRC reviews their evaluation and works through the ESP Departmental Coordinator to receive more information or discuss the findings. If the evaluation is accepted, it is forwarded to the Department Director.
3. The Department Director reviews and concurs with the evaluation and the appropriate recommendation is forwarded to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager.

When a suggestion is approved for a trial test, the employee receives a Recognition Award Certificate and eight (8) hours of administrative leave in accordance with the provisions of A.O. 7-8. The Certificate is produced by the Central Office, signed by the County Manager, and forwarded to the employee's department for presentation. The ESP Departmental Coordinator arranges the presentation and provides a congratulatory letter for the employee's Personnel File. Mention of the Recognition Award should also be included in the employee's next Performance Evaluation.

When a suggestion is not recommended for adoption, the employee receives notification directly from the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager with a copy of the departmental evaluation signed by the Department Director. The Central ESP Office also provides a participation gift.

Suggestions approved for trial testing must ultimately be evaluated to determine if permanent implementation will occur and a Special Award will be recommended.

Suggestions, which are successfully implemented, are eligible for a Special Award Certificate and cash award. The cash award amount is based on ten percent of the amount of first year savings resulting from the suggestion. The maximum tangible award is \$5,000. Implemented suggestions for which savings cannot be calculated are intangible suggestions. Awards are based on a point scale and the maximum amount awarded is \$1,000. Special Awards are presented by the County Manager's Office at a ceremony hosted by the Employee Relations Department. The awards are paid by the departments who benefit from the suggestions.

Suggestions, which are not implemented after trial testing, cannot receive a Special Award Certificate or cash. The Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager sends notification of the departmental decision to the employee after review.

All eligible suggestions declined for Recognition or Special Award can be reopened for a period of up to two years after the closing notice by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager if new information is provided or implementation occurs. This is often referred to as the employee's warranty period.

All suggestions recognized with a Special Award during the fiscal year are rated by the Manager's Grand Award Screening Panel. The suggesters of the top ten tangible and top ten intangible suggestions are invited to make presentations before the Panel and rated a second time.

Only the top three tangible and top three intangible suggestions become finalists and are invited before the Employee Suggestion Committee for another presentation. The Manager's Grand Award winner, a first runner-up and a second runner-up are selected based on the Committee's recommendation to the County Manager.

The winners are announced at the ESP Manager's Grand Award Ceremony and participants are recognized and awarded accordingly. Departmental participation and outstanding performances are also recognized at this annual event.

Eligibility

"It is the essence of genius to make use of the simplest idea"

Charles Peguy

Eligibility

Eligibility is often one of the toughest issues when it comes to suggestion programs. Some organizations reward and recognize everyone including management through the suggestion program. Others have specific rules, which relate to who is eligible and what is eligible.

Miami-Dade County's Employee Suggestion Program was created with the adoption of A.O. 7-8. The guidelines for both suggestion (what) and suggester (who) eligibility are spelled out there. The following provides additional information to assist suggesters, supervisors, managers, evaluators, and ESP Departmental Coordinators in recognizing the eligibility criteria and applying it. Highlights of this information are also contained on the ESP Submittal Form and at the ESP Website.

What is a Suggestion?

A suggestion is a voluntary, written, original idea proposed by an employee of Miami-Dade County that clearly identifies a specific problem, and suggests a specific method or improvement: to do any job or procedure better, quicker, easier, safer, or at less cost; to handle an additional work load with the same staff; to provide for more efficient and effective management operation; to increase the efficiency of revenue collection and generation; to improve the quality of services and facilities; to increase productivity; to improve the quality of life; to enhance the County's public image; or to otherwise benefit Miami-Dade County in the judgment of the Employee Suggestion Committee (the ultimate authority over the Program).

- For starters then, you know that an idea is not considered a suggestion and eligible for recognition through the Employee Suggestion Program until it is submitted in writing, clocked in at the Employee Relations Department and assigned a suggestion number.
- Only Miami-Dade County employees can participate.
- The suggestion must describe a specific problem and offer a specific solution. Or, it can be returned to the suggester as incomplete.
- The suggestion is reviewed by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager for eligibility before being forwarded to County departments for review. Some suggestions are never sent forward because this first step identifies a problem with the submittal.

What Types of Suggestions Are Ineligible?

The following suggestion subjects are not eligible for consideration through the Program. This means that a detailed evaluation is not needed if a Department determines that it does not meet the criteria and can provide documentation. No awards can obviously be granted for these types of suggestions.

- Personal and personnel grievances. (complaints)
- Adjustments in job classification, benefits, or salaries.
- Matters within the scope of collective bargaining.
- Matters requiring legislative or court action other than by County ordinance.
- Stricter enforcement of already existing rules.

- "Routine" corrections or updates to printed material and hard copy or other form.
- Periodic or routine matters for which established procedures are provided such as:
 - ✓ housekeeping (such as loose or frayed carpeting)
 - ✓ normal maintenance or repair (such as a missing or damaged stop sign or a malfunctioning traffic signal)
 - ✓ adherence to prescribed safety practices
- requisition or purchase of commonly used items (obtained from local stock, purchased locally, or available through General Services Administration)
- ideas on subjects periodically reexamined by management
- Increases in existing fees or charges
- Suggestions recommending the use of a specific product or brand available through County Procurement Practices or Procedures

Who is Ineligible?

There are only a few County employees who are exempted from participating in the Employee Suggestion Program by job title. These are:

- The County Manager and his staff
- Department Directors
- Division Directors
- Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager
- ESP Departmental Coordinators (while assigned)

Employees at the Office of Strategic Business Management (OSBM) and Audit and Management Services (AMS) will not be eligible for Special Award but participate in other recognition alternatives. All other County employees are eligible, including supervisors. **But**, the County pays employees to perform a job. ESP guidelines provide that when the subject matter of a suggestion is *within the job responsibilities of the employee*, they may not be eligible for Recognition and Special Award.

This is often the most difficult part to administer about the Program. Keep in mind that we want to recognize employees for being creative and looking beyond existing processes to identify efficiencies. So, here are some simple questions to help clarify the eligibility question:

- Is the employee expected or required to make suggestions of the type under consideration as a part of their normal job responsibilities?
- Was the employee asked to solve the problem described in the suggestion, as a job assignment?
- Can the employee/ suggester implement the idea without seeking approval from a higher authority?

If the answer were "yes" to any of these questions, the suggester would not be eligible for a Recognition or Special Award.

- Would the employee receive a lower performance rating if they had not brought the suggestion to management's attention?
- Would management hold the employee accountable for this type of suggestion?

If the answer is "yes" to either of these questions, the suggestion probably falls within the scope of the suggesters' normal job duties and is thereby ineligible.

Keep in mind that suggester eligibility often involves a judgment call on the part of management. Therefore, each suggestion must be viewed individually. If an employee is not eligible for a particular suggestion, they may be eligible for an Innovator Award.

Innovator Award

A.O. 7-8 provides for another level of recognition called Innovator Award. Employees who are not eligible for Recognition or Special Award can be nominated by their department director for their innovations. The nomination is sent to the Employee Suggestion Committee's Chairperson with documentation describing the idea and how it has impacted the department and the County as a whole. The ESP Committee reviews the nominations and recommends the idea to receive the award or explains why such recognition is not granted.

The County Manager or his representative present an Innovator Award in the form of a plaque and may authorize a cash award up to \$500. Employees who are judged ineligible to receive ESP recognition because their suggestion relates to their job responsibilities may be candidates for Innovator Awards.

Conclusion

If an employee is eligible at the time of submitting a suggestion, but the status if that employee changes prior to the evaluation of that suggestion, they are still eligible to receive an award if the suggestion is adopted. Change in status includes:

- Leave of absence
- Termination (voluntary or involuntary)
- Layoff (definite or indefinite)
- Retirement
- Death (in case of death, the award is paid to the suggester's beneficiaries)

The Evaluation Process

THE ESSENCE OF INNOVATION

"Everything that can be invented already has been." This statement was released in 1899 by the U.S. Patent Office. If these 'experts' ran the world we would still be sitting in the dark. It is our responsibility to shatter outdated thinking and explore the realm of the untested; it is here that breakthrough opportunities are waiting to be discovered.

The Evaluation Process

A.O. 7-8 affords County departments the flexibility to establish internal evaluation procedures in a way that best meets their own particular organizational and informational needs. Department Directors appoint the ESP Departmental Coordinator as the contact point for information with the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager. The Department Director then decides who will serve on the Departmental Suggestion Review Committee (DSRC). Some departments may elect to set-up several committees to focus in particular subject areas. The value of the DSRC will be in helping the Coordinator move suggestions through the evaluation process and then to review the evaluation work product before it is finalized by the Department Director. The DSRC brings expertise and experience to bear on the process.

Identification of Evaluators

The ESP Departmental Coordinator is the first person in a department to receive a new suggestion. Even though the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager reviews all new suggestions for eligibility, the Coordinator should also carefully read all new suggestions to ensure their eligibility. (Greater details are provided on eligibility in another section of this packet.)

Departments can elect to use individual evaluators or evaluation teams or a combination thereof. Departments may elect to have the DSRC function as evaluators. If individual evaluators are used, they may be supervisors or managers in the areas affected by the suggestion or individuals specially designated and trained to complete evaluations. Subject matter experts may also be a part of the evaluation process.

By Definition:

EVALUATOR. A person assigned to review suggestions and determine the feasibility of implementation. This person is usually a supervisor or manager in the area impacted by the suggestion or that would be responsible for implementation. Evaluators must be held responsible for getting suggestions implemented when they recommend them so. They are accountable to the Department Director who relies on their evaluation to determine which suggestions are implemented by the department and recognized accordingly.

EVALUATION TEAM. A group of persons assigned by the Department Director and/ or the ESP Departmental Coordinator to review suggestions, determine the feasibility of implementation, and make final decisions on adoption. The Team becomes responsible for the implementation of suggestions that they approve once the Department Director concurs with their recommendation.

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT. A person with specific expertise related to the suggestion being evaluated. This person could be called upon by the evaluator or evaluation team to provide technical input and otherwise assist with the evaluation of a suggestion.

Evaluation Team Make-up

If an evaluation team is used, the make-up of that team will depend on the individual needs of that department. The team might include one representative from each major division or might have some fixed members (e.g. finance, personnel) and others that rotate depending on the subject of the suggestion being reviewed. The DSRC may be similarly set up so overlap may occur.

Receipt of Suggestions

A.O. 7-8 provides that employee suggesters can transmit their submittal directly to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager in the Employee Relations Department. Employees do not have to share it with their supervisor or department first.

When an employee brings a suggestion to their supervisor or the ESP Departmental Coordinator, they may be seeking assistance in the form of a review or comment. Involvement by supervisors and ESP Departmental Coordinator is encouraged. Improving communication between all levels of County government is one of ESP's main purposes. But, it is important that departments not prevent suggestions from being sent to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager by recommending additional development of a potential submittal. Instead, all suggestions should be forwarded to the central ESP Office in the Employee Relations Department to ensure that suggesters receive credit for initiating the idea. Further refinements can be submitted as a follow up or amendment to the original suggestion.

Evaluator Responsibilities

Evaluators, whether individuals or teams, are responsible for reviewing suggestions, assessing their feasibility, and either making adoption decisions or providing all necessary information to an appropriate decision maker. To ensure a complete and meaningful evaluation, the process should include the following steps:

1. Review the suggestion for completeness. Contact the suggester or co-suggesters and discuss the idea if further clarification as needed. Open communication is encouraged.
2. Make certain the suggestion is eligible based on the eligibility guidelines provided in A.O. 7-8 and further examined later in this packet.
3. Access the pros and cons of a suggestion. These can include cost and savings factors, ease or difficulty of implementation, degree of improvement likely to be achieved, affect on customer service or employee morale, and/or a variety of other factors. Obtain input from subject matter experts or others as appropriate.

4. Always explore the possibility of using the idea with modifications. Many suggestions cannot be used exactly as submitted, but could be used with minor modifications or could be used in part. Discussions could be held with suggesters, supervisors, and subject matter experts to determine whether partial use or modifications are appropriate. Even if an idea is not used but triggers an alternative improvement it is eligible for an award. (See ACTION AWARD)

5. Make a definite decision for or against adoption. This is normally the responsibility of the evaluator or evaluation team. The ESP Departmental Coordinator should always perform a follow-up to the evaluation to ensure that implementation is being handled properly by the evaluator or evaluation team. When a Department Directors signs off on an evaluation, the responsibility is on the evaluator and Coordinator to comply with the Director's recommendation.

6. Document the adopt or non-adopt decision and the reasons for it. This documentation should be written and should be as complete and detailed as possible. If a suggestion is being trial tested, a schedule should be included. If the suggestion is being adopted, the documentation should include a complete analysis of cost savings and/or an assessment of the value of the idea and the extent of implementation. Evaluation Forms may be used for this process or evaluation documentation may be provided in memo form, as the department prefers. A sample of an evaluation form already used by several County departments is included in this packet as are examples of suggestions with completed evaluations.

Completed Evaluations

After an evaluation is completed, the ESP Departmental Coordinator reviews it to ensure compliance with ESP Guidelines. The DSRC is presented with the evaluation and any documentation before the paperwork is forwarded to the Department Director. The DSRC may request more detail and additional information as deemed necessary from the suggester, the evaluators or others. The ESP Departmental Coordinator acts to acquire needed material and information on behalf of the DSRC. All evaluations whether positive or negative must be reviewed and signed by Department Directors. This includes both Recognition Award and Special Award evaluations.

A review by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager finalizes the Recognition Award and Special Award process. When a suggestion is recommended for Recognition Award, details must be provided by the evaluating department that demonstrate both suggestion and suggester eligibility were fully considered, information to support trial testing of the suggestion with collaboration of anticipated benefits, and a time table for trial testing and implementation included. The employee receives 8 hours of administrative leave at this award level.

When a Special Award is recommended, a complete evaluation including savings estimate, or benefit analysis and the final implementation date should be supplied to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager. A Special Award Recommendation Form must be completed, signed and dated. A voucher with the correct award amount and budget code, photographs to document the implementation, and a brief synopsis for presentation and promotion purposes are also required. The Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager is charged with getting the suggestion scheduled for presentation as promptly as practical.

Notice to Employees

Employees are notified in writing of any decisions related to their ideas by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager in the central ESP office in the Employee Relations Department. Copies of the departmental evaluations are presented as attachments. It is extremely important that all evaluations be tactful and as positive as possible. Not all ideas can be used, however, it is vital to the success of the suggestion program that employee ideas are encouraged and that all ideas addressed in a positive manner.

In addition to written notice, departments should be communicating with suggesters to make certain that they feel involved in the decision process. This makes a non-adoption decision easier to explain and accept. It is a good business practice when your mission is motivating employees and improving morale. Every evaluator and ESP Departmental Coordinator is an ambassador for the Employee Suggestion Program. Their acceptance of this role is paramount to the perception of commitment by departments to their work force.

Evaluation Time Frames

Recognition Award evaluations should be completed within 60 days of receipt of the suggestion. Employees will be notified by the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager of the results of the evaluation immediately thereafter.

Whenever delays occur the Evaluator should notify the suggester and the ESP Departmental Coordinator. If possible, a written explanation should be sent to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager in the Employee Relations Department. An extension of time will be officially granted and the evaluation due date can be adjusted as needed. Communication is the key to ESP's success. A well-informed suggester perceives the department's interest as genuine. Perception is extremely important when individuals are sharing ideas and asking for feedback.

Special Award evaluations may take up to a year or sometimes, unfortunately, a bit longer. This is due in part to difficulties in getting replacement parts or approvals by various units. Sometimes, issues with completing the tracking of suggestion savings cause delays. Actual numbers are necessary to determine cash award amounts correctly. To make this process as quick and efficient as possible, Evaluators should handle the implementation of adopted suggestions immediately. Once a Department Director signs off on a recommendation, the department is committed to analyzing the results of suggestions and properly compensating the employee. Obviously the highest value is generated from an idea that is put to use quickly and which benefits the County through either tangible cost savings or intangible benefits like promoting an enhanced public image. When a suggestion does not receive the appropriate follow through, the department's effort is diminished by the delay.

Suggestion Records

At the present time the ESP Central Office in the Employee Relations Department maintains a database and files for all the suggestions submitted through the Program. This is an important function as it tracks department participation and performance and determines time lines for suggestion eligibility. Many County departments also develop internal tracking systems that include data entry elements. For record keeping purposes the Central Office files are considered the permanent file.

Tips for Evaluators - - As easy as 1,2,3...

Be prompt. Read the suggestion promptly upon receipt. You may not be the person who should respond to the suggestion. If this is the case - date, sign, and return the suggestion to the person who sent it to you with a note recommending who should evaluate the suggestion. If you have any doubt, call the office or the person for verification.

Understand. Be sure you understand the intent of the suggestion. To do this, determine:

- ☒ whether the problem actually exists;
- ☒ whether the problem is of sufficient magnitude to justify costly investigations and implementation;
- ☒ whether the suggested idea will solve the problem (and remember, if the suggestion stimulates thinking or action or an alternative idea that does solve the problem, the suggester should get credit as an Action Award.

Analyze. Gather all pertinent data, including:

- ☒ details of current and proposed practices;
- ☒ estimates of benefits and costs with implementing the idea;
- ☒ samples, as necessary.

Then, analyze the data to determine if;

- ☒ the evidence is sufficient to make a sound final recommendation on behalf of management;
- ☒ another agency/ department office should also evaluate the suggestion for possible implementation;
- ☒ the suggestion is of sufficient merit to recommend it to another agency/ department.

Decide. When writing a non-adopt (decline) decision:

- ☒ obtain valid justification for the non-adoption decision;
- ☒ write a full and complete report

Remember that a copy of your evaluation will be sent to the suggester with a non-adoption letter and that the suggester may submit a rebuttal to your evaluation in which both documents would potentially be reviewed by the County Manager's Office.

When writing an adopt decision:

- ☒ develop a detailed estimate of the cost to implement the idea, if any;
- ☒ develop a detailed estimate of first-year tangible savings;
- ☒ indicate intangible benefits value and extent of application. (These can be useful tools for comparisons after implementation.)

Submit. Submit the evaluation promptly to your ESP Departmental Coordinator so that a review and signature can be obtained from your Department Director and the completed recommendation can be sent to the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager.

If your evaluation recommends adoption, initiate actions needed to conduct a trial test or final implementation as indicated in your report. You have a responsibility to your department and the employee to trial test or implement as the evaluator.

Writing the Evaluation Report

Be Positive. Approach every suggestions with a positive attitude. If the entire suggestion cannot be adopted, consider whether it may be adopted in part or modified. In these instances, the suggester may be entitled to an award based on the extent of influence the suggestion contributed to management's action. Be certain the reasons for the action are understood. If you cannot adopt a suggestion, do not dwell on, or overemphasize, its disadvantages.

Summarize First. Start your evaluation with a brief summary of the suggestion so the suggester knows you understood the idea. Then, follow with reasons for your decision and conclude with an expression of appreciation for participation in the Program.

Watch the Tone. Write answers that you would be willing to accept. Avoid a cold, impersonal, or superior tone! (Remember that a copy of your evaluation, with your name, will be sent to the suggester with a non-adoption letter.)

Write the answer with the suggester in mind. Use language that the suggester will understand. A responsive answer often eliminates requests for reconsideration/ reevaluation.

Don't "Turn Off" Future Involvement

Avoid words or statements that might "Turn Off" suggesters such as:

- ☒ "scheme" (It has an unpleasant sound ...use "plan" or "Idea")
- ☒ "impractical" (also unpleasant... use "not feasible")
- ☒ "gadget" (it belittles a suggester)
- ☒ "reject" or "rejection" (use instead, "not adopted" or "declined")

Be Brief

Try to keep your evaluation short. In other words, do not write 300 words if 50 will do the job... and don't overwhelm the reader with detail.

Be Timely

Respond in a timely manner. Remember that delaying the implementation of a suggestion costs us – the government- money.

Legality

Consider the legal aspects of your response. Remember that laws and regulations can be changed. The fact that a current law or regulation does not permit the suggestion is not a valid reason for not recommending adoption. So law as the change can be made by the Board of County Commissioners, it is still within the County's control.

Review

As you review your draft evaluation, ask yourself these questions:

- ☒ Is it written to the suggester?
- ☒ Is it clear as to why the suggestion will, or will not, be adopted?
- ☒ Is it motivational - does it encourage a future suggestion?
- ☒ Is it appreciative - does it thank the suggester for taking the time and making an effort to submit ideas for improving the organization?
- ☒ Is it possible to implement the suggestion in another unit of the agency/ department? Did you tell the suggester?
- ☒ Are you totally satisfied with the research data analysis, conclusions, and write-up of the evaluation?
- ☒ In writing the evaluation - have you been totally fair, long-range minded, and objective?
- ☒ If you were the suggester, would you be satisfied to receive the evaluation?

If the answer is no to any of the above, the evaluation should be revised.

In short, the rule for the successful processing of an evaluation could be boiled down to:

Treat it Right!

Write it Right!

Expedite!

Still more tips...

As an evaluator the words you choose to communicate a decision to adopt a suggestion or to decline a suggestion are of the utmost importance. The following are samples of opening and closing statements which may prove helpful when as the saying goes "the right words seem to fail you."

Samples of Opening And Closing Statements

Your (or employee's name) suggestion concerning _____ has been carefully considered and has been given individual attention by _____ (be specific).

Your (or employee's name) suggestion concerning _____ has been carefully considered, but has not been accepted for implementation for the following reason(s):

Although we are unable to adopt this (or employee's name) suggestion, we want them to know that we appreciate them bringing this idea to the attention of management. It is only by seeing the need for changes and recommending ways to meet these needs that we can hope to improve. We encourage (insert employee's name) to continue to be on the alert for other ideas.

Although this submittal has not been accepted, we want to thank the suggester for sharing their creativity with us.

Although this idea is not being adopted, we appreciate the suggester's interest with improving operations.

The effort made by (insert employee's name) in developing this suggestion is appreciated. We hope to see more ideas from them in the future.

Many thanks for your interest in ways to improve our procedures. You are in an excellent position to identify problems that need correction and improvement.

We commend the suggester (or insert employee's name) for the time and effort expended in submitting this suggestion and encourage their continued participation in the suggestion program.

Despite the fact that we do not recommend adoption of this suggestion, we recognize the effort that was made by the suggester to bring the problem to management's attention with a possible solution.

I want to thank the suggester for taking the time to submit the suggestion. And welcome the opportunity of reviewing other ideas from them in the future.

We appreciate the suggester's interest in improvement through the submittal of suggestions.

ESP Evaluation Forms

A positive attitude causes a chain reaction of positive thoughts, events, and outcomes. It is a catalyst...a spark that creates extraordinary results.

ESP EVALUATION FORMS

ESP Evaluation Forms can be used for Recognition Award Evaluations and Special Award Evaluations.

1. Eligibility questions should be answered during the Recognition Award phase. If the suggestion does not meet the eligibility criteria a formal evaluation on the feasibility or practicality of the idea is not needed. Even when viability of the idea is discussed, eligibility is the determining factor and all issues should be disclosed during this phase.

2. If a Recognition Award (trial test) is not recommended by the Department, the Tangible and Intangible Award Worksheets are obviously not needed. As a matter of fact, these worksheets are not required until the suggestion has been implemented. These forms should be completed with figures can be documented.

3. Sometimes when a positive Recognition Award recommendation is generated by a Department, the evaluator uses the Tangible and/ or Intangible Award Worksheets to support the trial test phase of the suggestion. This is good documentation tool once the idea is successful.

4. If implementation of a suggestion occurs immediately, the Department can recommend the suggestion for the Recognition and Special Award simultaneously. The appropriate Worksheets and documentation are required before a suggestion can receive a cash award.

5. Whenever practical, an effort to access cost savings should be made. The Department's goal should be to recognize everyone consistently and fairly. The amount of the Special Award is a critical aspect of the recognition process. Employees should feel that the recognition is relative to the value of the suggestion to the Department and the County as a whole.

6. No Special Award (cash) can be presented until a suggestion is implemented. If implementation requires that 800 pieces of equipment be modified, the Department can move forward with presenting the suggestion for Award when the modification has been applied to at least 50% of the equipment.

7. The Forms and documentation provided by evaluators is used to respond to suggesters and to process suggestions for recognition through the various ESP Committees including eventually the County Manager.

The evaluator represents the Department and the Department Director. When an evaluator provides information of behalf of the Department, they will be held accountable.

**Employee Relations Department
Miami-Dade County Employee Suggestion Program / Recognition Award Evaluation Form**

Congratulations

You have just been selected to evaluate this ESP Suggestion. Are you the right person to make a decision over the subject matter of the idea? Does it relate to something concerning your area of expertise? If not, please call your ESP Departmental Coordinator immediately. If so, read on...

Glad to have your assistance with reviewing this ESP submittal. This Form has been developed to help (not hinder) the evaluation process. If you prefer to respond in a different format be sure to respond to all issues as needed. Start by insuring the suggestion is eligible. If you answer yes to any of these questions, further evaluation is not needed. Provide any details that would be helpful in preparing a response to the suggester in the lines on the back and return the suggestion with this form to your ESP Departmental Coordinator. If you deem the suggestion eligible continue as indicated: (To learn more about ESP refer to A.O. 7-8.)

ELIGIBILITY

		YES	NO
Was this idea under departmental consideration prior to the date of Suggestion? If yes, attach documentation identifying dates and individuals involved.			
Is the employee expected or required to make suggestions of the type under consideration as a part of his/her normal job responsibilities?			
Can the employee implement the Suggestion without consulting higher authority?			
Was this problem specifically assigned to the Suggester for the development of a solution?			
Did this Suggestion, although not used itself, lead to another solution to the problem?			
Will the implementation of this Suggestion infringe upon or violate existing County rules, regulations or policies?			
Does the Suggestion meet the ESP Rules for Eligibility? If not, check reason for ineligibility and explain below:			
Suggestion Eligibility			
*Duplicate Suggestion	*Stricter Enforcement of Existing Rules	*Idea Already in Place	*Routine Maintenance or Housekeeping
*Grievance	*Legislative Court Action	*Employee Benefits/Salaries	*Collective Bargaining

Now, do you know if the suggesting employee is eligible? If they are not in your department or under your supervision but you have authority to implement this idea, they are probably eligible. Everyone below the level of Division Director is eligible to participate and suggest in ESP. It is only when a suggester can put an idea into effect on their own that their eligibility is questioned. Refer to A.O. 7-8 if for more information. Contact your ESP Departmental Coordinator if you believe the suggester not eligible. The ESP Job Responsibility Form may be helpful in coming to a decision in this area.

You have determined the suggestion eligible for evaluation. Will it be trial tested? If so, briefly explain your timeframe and plan for trial testing the suggestion. Your positive response will allow the suggester to receive a Recognition Award at this time. This is a Certificate signed by the County Manager and presented at the suggester's department. Eight (8) hours of Administrative Leave is also awarded.

If the suggestion will not be trial tested, explain why not on the back of this form. Your negative response will close the suggestion and initiate a two-year period that allows the suggestion to be reconsidered and full ESP credit presented. Department Directors must sign-off on all evaluations submitted by their staff.

Miami-Dade County Employee Suggestion Program / Recognition Award Evaluation

When responding to suggestions remember: greet every suggestion with an open mind. Employee involvement and participation by County employees provides the creativity and innovation needed to motivate our diverse complex organization. You hold the key to this process when you evaluate an employee idea.

If you have any questions about the Employee Suggestion Program or how to complete the evaluation form, please contact either the Employee Recognition and Suggestion Manager at The Employee Relations Department at 305.375.1364 or your ESP Departmental Coordinator.

Additional Details as Information for Suggester (as needed):

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant Recognition Award

Special Award Evaluation Anticipated: _____

Do Not Grant Recognition Award

☐ Grant Both Recognition and Special Award; Implemented Since _____

Please print or type details in addition to signatures. Suggestion# _____

Title: _____

Department Evaluating: _____

Evaluator: _____

Signature: _____

Contact number and e-mail: _____

I have reviewed this evaluation and the suggestion submitted. I agree with the positive/ negative (circle one) recommendation above.

Date: _____

Department Director / Signature

ESP Departmental Coordinator/ Signature

Returned: _____

TANGIBLE SPECIAL AWARD WORKSHEET

Calculate or estimate the first year's savings and costs associated with implementing the Suggestion. Deduct implementation costs over the same period or in the case of capital equipment, deduct one year's costs amortized over the useful life of the equipment.

1. PREVIOUS METHOD								2. SUGGESTED METHOD							
<u>LABOR</u>				<u>LABOR</u>				<u>LABOR</u>				<u>LABOR</u>			
Class		AV Hrly Rate x No. of Hrs*=Cost Plus Fringe		Class		AV Hrly Rate x No. of Hrs*=Cost Plus Fringe		Class		AV Hrly Rate x No. of Hrs*=Cost Plus Fringe		Class		AV Hrly Rate x No. of Hrs*=Cost Plus Fringe	
				Annually								Annually			
		Total								Total					
<u>EQUIPMENT</u>				<u>EQUIPMENT</u>				<u>EQUIPMENT</u>				<u>EQUIPMENT</u>			
Type		Item cost x No. Of Items = Cost		Type		Item Cost x No. Of Items = Cost		Type		Item Cost x No. Of Items = Cost		Type		Item Cost x No. Of Items = Cost	
		Total												Total	
<u>MATERIALS</u>				<u>MATERIALS</u>				<u>MATERIALS</u>				<u>MATERIALS</u>			
Type		Unit Price x No. Of Units = Costs		Type		Unit Price x No. Of Units = Costs		Type		Unit Price x No. Of Units = Costs		Type		Unit Price x No. Of Units = Costs	
				Annually								Annually			
		Total												Total	
								<u>IMPLEMENTATION COSTS</u>							
				Type				Cost Useful Life = First Year (No. Years) Cost							
												Total			
GRAND TOTAL								GRAND TOTAL							

PREVIOUS COST Annually	LESS ESTIMATED NEW COST Annually	3. FIRST YEAR NET SAVINGS Annually
---------------------------	-------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

-
- Specify unit of time, i.e. week, month, year.

4. Estimate cannot be provided at this time without a field trial to determine acceptability.

Field Test Start Date: _____ Estimated Field Trial End Date: _____

**Employee Relations Department
EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM
INTANGIBLE SPECIAL AWARD WORKSHEET**

Suggestion # _____

Suggestion Title: _____

Suggester(s): _____

		Point Value	Rating
Applicability:	Local operation (unit)	(1)	_____
	Division	(2)	_____
	Entire Department	(3)	_____
	Several Departments	(4)	_____
	Countywide or major public impact	(5)	_____
Importance of Change or Improvement	Minor	(1)	_____
	Appreciable	(2)	_____
	Considerable	(3)	_____
Ingenuity and Originality	Not Innovative	(0)	_____
	Limited	(1)	_____
	Moderate	(2)	_____
	Extensive	(3)	_____
Documented Accident (Loss) Prior to Suggestion		(1)	_____
New Invention		(2)	_____
Safety Enhancement	Employee	(1)	_____
	Citizens	(2)	_____
Customer Service Enhancement	Internal	(1)	_____
	External	(2)	_____
Maximizes Technology		(1)	_____

This suggestion may involve some unique qualities or attributes that are not adequately reflected on this form.
Please describe any such details.

Evaluator: _____

Contact# _____

Employee Relations Department
Employee Suggestion Program – Job Responsibility Form

TO: <input type="checkbox"/>		FROM:		<input type="checkbox"/>	
SUGGESTER'S NAME: <input type="checkbox"/>					
SUGGESTION NO. <input type="checkbox"/>	POSITION TITLE: <input type="checkbox"/>	DATE SUGGESTION SUBMITTED: <input type="checkbox"/>			
<p>In answering questions below, the following criteria will be applied:</p> <p>A. Suggestions relating to the suggester(s) work environment are needed and encouraged. The best suggestions are Usually associated with the suggester's own work. Therefore, every idea generated cannot be presumed to be within the individual's job responsibility.</p> <p>B. Duty related issues should not be confused with job responsibility.</p> <p>C. (1) duty Related: Associated with work environment, but not required in the usual and customary duties or daily performance expectations of the position.</p> <p>(2) Job Responsibility. Considered within expected job performance requirements. It is a duty assigned by competent authority. Job responsibility suggestions are those which usually could have been presented orally and implemented by the authority of the first or second level that must be approved and implemented at either a Division Director or higher level is <u>not</u> job responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/></p>					
EVALUATION					
1. DOES THE SUGGESTER HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO DEVIATE OR TO CHANGE CURRENT PROCEDURES? <input type="checkbox"/>				YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
2. NAME OF ACTIVITY (Management Level, Division, Unit) HAVING <i>AUTHORITY</i> TO APPROVE AND IMPLEMENT THE CHANGE:					
3. IS THIS ACTIVITY ORGANIZATIONALLY AT TWO OR MORE LEVELS ABOVE THE SUGGESTER? <input type="checkbox"/>				YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
4. IS THE SUGGESTER BEING PAID TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS OF THIS NATURE AS PART OF NORMAL DUTY ASSIGNMENTS? IF YES, WHAT WOULD BE THE SUGGESTER'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR EFFECTING OR RECOMMENDING THE CHANGE TO BE MADE?					
5. IF THE SUGGESTION HAD NOT BEEN MADE WOULD THE SUGGESTER'S WORK PERFORMANCE BE JUDGED LESS THAN SATISFACTORY? <input type="checkbox"/>					
6. IS THE SUGGESTER EXPECTED TO FOLLOW SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS? IF NO, WHAT LATITUDE IS GIVEN TO THE SUGGESTER REGARDING THE SUBJECT MATTER?					
7. ARE WE REWARDING A PERSON FOR CAUSING AN IMPROVEMENT WHICH OTHERWISE MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED? <input type="checkbox"/>					
DECISION					
8. BASED UPON THE ABOVE, I BELIEVE THE SUGGESTION TO BE:				YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
a. OUTSIDE THE CUSTOMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUGGESTER. THE SUGGESTER IS NOT EXPECTED TO RECOMMEND OR EFFECT THIS IMPROVEMENT					
b. WITHIN THE CUSTOMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUGGESTER.					
III. REMARKS (Optional) <input type="checkbox"/>					
TYPED NAME AND TITLE (<i>Immediate Supervisor</i>) <input type="checkbox"/>			SIGNATURE:		DATE: <input type="checkbox"/>
TYPED NAME AND TITLE (<i>Second Level Supervisor</i>) <input type="checkbox"/>			SIGNATURE:		DATE: <input type="checkbox"/>



**EMPLOYEE RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM - SPECIAL AWARD RECOMMENDATION**

SUG _____	TITLE: _____
SUGGESTER'S DEPT: _____ EVALUATING DEPT(S): _____	

INTANGIBLE AWARD

		POINT VALUE	YOUR RATING
Applicability	Local Operation (Unit)	1	
	Division	2	
	Entire Department	3	
	Several Departments	4	
	Countywide or Major Public Impact	5	
Importance Of Change or Improvement	Minor	1	
	Appreciable	2	
	Considerable	3	
Ingenuity and Originality	Not Innovative	0	
	Limited	1	
	Moderate	2	
	Extensive	3	
Documented Accident (loss) Prior to Suggestion		1	
New Invention		2	
Safety Enhancement	Employee	1	
	Citizen	2	
Customer Service Enhancement	Internal	1	
	External	2	
Maximizes Technology		1	
	TOTAL		

POINT CASH VALUES: 3=\$50 4=\$100 5=\$150 6=\$200 7=\$250 8=\$300 9=\$350
 10=\$400 11=\$500 12=\$600 13=\$700 14=\$800 15=\$900 16=\$1,000

TANGIBLE AWARDS

Cost Savings:

\$ _____

Previous Cost \$ _____
Less Estimated New Cost \$ _____

NET SAVINGS: \$ _____
\$ _____

CASH AWARD (10% first year savings)

DSRC REVIEW	APPROVE	DENY	SEE NOTE	Date: _____
APPROVED BY: _____				DATE: _____
DEPARTMENT: _____				DATE: _____
REVIEWED BY: _____				DATE: _____

Director, Employee Relations Department

AWARD AMOUNT: \$ _____